

being interconnected by integral bridging portions for permitting flexibility between the deformable elements, said deformable elements each having a substantially oval-shaped horizontal cross-section, and wherein said bridging portion of said first and second casings is aligned with a flex line of the foot of the user.

18. (Amended) An article of footwear as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said elements include an element located in a heel portion of the midsole and wherein said at least one element has a stiffness greater than said element located at the heel portion of the midsole so as to reduce the degree of pronation of the foot of the user during running.

29. (Amended) An article of footwear as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said insert comprises a heel cushioning element positioned inwardly from an adjacent border of the sole to permit full encapsulation of said element in the midsole.

31. (Amended) A method of forming an insert for an article of footwear, which comprises:

forming at least one insert from a plurality of interconnected elements;  
inserting said elements into first and second casings so as to be positioned in a midsole portion of an article of footwear such that the biomechanics of a foot of a user wearing the article of footwear are optimized wherein the step of forming the interconnected element comprises forming at least two batteries of deformable elements so as to be respectively positioned in said first and second casings wherein said deformable elements are each substantially oval-shaped in horizontal cross-section, the step of forming the elements comprises forming at least two batteries of said deformable elements, and

interconnecting said first and second casings by a bridging portion wherein the step of forming the deformable elements comprises interconnecting said deformable elements by integral bridging portions.

39. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step for forming the elements comprises forming the elements so as to include an element located in a heel portion of the midsole and forming at least one of said elements so as to have a stiffness greater than the element located at the heel portion of the midsole so as to reduce a degree of pronation of the foot during running.

43. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step of inserting at least one insert comprises inserting at least one insert in a central heel cushioning portion of the midsole and locating a lateral cushioning portion in the sole with a hinge portion interconnecting the central heel cushioning portion and the lateral cushioning portion so as to absorb impact forces from the heel portion of the foot and to reduce leveraged acceleration of the midsole towards the ground as well as a rate of pronation.

44. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein inserting the insert comprises inserting a heel insert into the midsole having a central heel portion, a lateral cushioning portion and a hinge portion interconnecting the central heel portion and said lateral cushioning portion.

45. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 44, which comprises distancing a rear lateral border portion of said insert from an outside border of the shoe and the midsole to permit encapsulation of the insert with the foam member.

47. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step of inserting the insert comprises inserting an insert having a plurality of cushioning elements located at a rear portion of the heel and at least one laterally positioned forefoot

element to reduce any tendency of the sole to collapse under a forefoot lateral border portion on the midsole during a cutting motion of the user when running.

49. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step of inserting the insert comprises inserting an insert having at least one heel element and a forefoot pad positioned inwardly from adjacent borders of the midsole so as to permit encapsulation thereof in the midsole.

50. (Amended) The method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step of inserting the insert comprises inserting a heel cushioning element positioned inwardly from an adjacent border of the midsole to permit full encapsulation of the element in the midsole.

Please add new Claims 52-60 as follows:

52. (New) Particle of footwear as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said elements are substantially H-shaped in vertical cross-section.

53. (New) Particle of footwear as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said elements are substantially H-shaped in vertical cross-section.

54. (New) Method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the step of forming the elements comprises forming elements which are substantially H-shaped in vertical cross-section.

55. (New) Particle of footwear as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first casing is substantially circular in horizontal cross-section and said second casing is substantially arcuate shaped in horizontal cross-section.

56. (New) Method claimed in Claim 31, wherein the inserting of said elements into the first and second casing comprises inserting said elements into a first casing having a substantially circularly shaped horizontal cross-section and into a second casing having a substantially arcuate shaped horizontal cross-section.

57. (New) An article of footwear, which comprises:

a vamp;

a lower support connected to said vamp, said lower support including a midsole;

and

at least one insert mounted in said midsole and which includes first and second airtight casings each having a plurality of elements positioned therein which are elastically deformable such that the biomechanics of a foot of a user are optimized, said first and second casings being interconnected by a bridging portion aligned with a flex line of the foot of a user, and said deformable elements being interconnected by integral bridging portions for permitting flexibility between the first and second casings.

58. (New) An article of footwear as claimed in Claim 57, wherein said bridging portion of said first and second casings is aligned with a flex line of the foot of the user.

59. (New) A method of forming an insert for an article of footwear, which

comprises:

forming at least one insert from a plurality of interconnected elements;

inserting said elements into first and second casings so as to be positioned in a midsole portion of an article of footwear such that the biomechanics of a foot of a user wearing the article of footwear are optimized wherein the step of forming the interconnected elements comprises forming deformable elements so as to be respectively positioned in said first and second casings, and

interconnecting said first and second casings by a bridging portion aligned with a flex line of the foot of a user.

60. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 29, wherein said bridging portion of said first and second casings are aligned with a flex line of the foot of the user.